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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [ET](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SO](#)
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT YUSUF IN ADDIS

Classified By: Ambassador Donald Yamamoto for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (C) Summary: Ambassador Yamamoto and DCM Malac met with President Yusuf on February 9 during his stopover in Addis en route back to Somalia. Although frail, Yusuf was engaged and forcefully stated his intention to stay in power through the end of his mandate in late 2009. He reiterated his commitment to reconciliation with all, including former-CIC elements, who are loyal to Somalia and not in league with terrorists. At the same time, Yusuf and his aides rified on whether it was realistic to include these same moderates since they were only interested in Islamic state, not the democratic future that Yusuf wished to pursue for Somalia. As for Somaliland, Yusuf was quite clear that he viewed it as part of Somalia and he would not permit it to secede. End summary.

¶2. (C) During a stopover in Addis en route from London to Somalia, President Yusuf invited Ambassador Yamamoto and DCM for a brief, but cordial, meeting on February 9. Fresh from medical treatment in Europe, Yusuf still appeared frail, but in good spirits. His first comment was that he had every intention of seeing through his mandate as President and putting Somalia on the path to democratic elections in 2009. Yusuf stressed his commitment to reconciliation and reaching out to all clans in the country who were loyal to Somalia and not working with terrorists. U.S. support was critical, said Yusuf, to keeping the pressure on those who did not want peace for anyone. Most importantly, the TFG needed U.S. and international financial and security support in order to deliver services to the people and to keep Somalia on the path of transition to democracy.

¶3. (C) Yusuf and the Ambassador briefly discussed Assistant Secretary Frazer's recent visit to Somaliland. Ambassador

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noted that the trip was not meant to convey recognition for Somaliland, but rather an opportunity to see first-hand the situation in Somaliland and to resume a critical security dialogue with officials in Hargeisa. Yusuf stated unequivocally that Somaliland was part of Somalia and would not be allowed to secede. He said the on-going fighting between Somaliland and Puntland was also unacceptable, but pledged that the TFG was interested in negotiating with Somaliland, not fighting.

¶4. (C) Comment: While Yusuf said the right things about being willing to talk to moderates in the former-CIC, he and his

aides spent considerable time in the brief meeting explaining why it really wasn't possible to include these "moderates" in a Somali government. The reason - everyone affiliated with the CIC, even those who were not extremists, wanted to see the establishment of a Taliban-like Islamic state in Somalia.

Yusuf and the TFG wanted to see democracy take root. There was no way, according to Yusuf, to reconcile these two competing visions. Yusuf planned to meet with PM Meles and FM Seyoum later the same day. Meles will very likely push Yusuf to reach out to moderates in the CIC, especially in light of Ethiopia's private contacts with CIC elements in Asmara (Addis 286). Given Yusuf's views, Meles will have to push hard.

YAMAMOTO